

Live Your Best Life Later

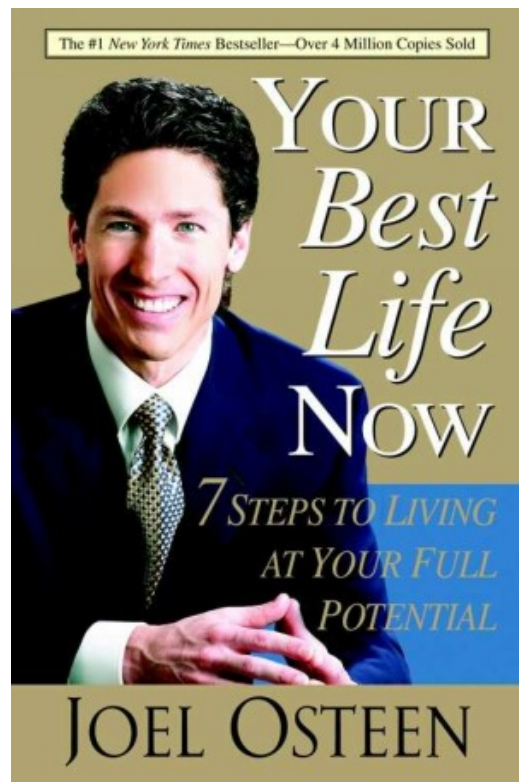
Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

Luke 18:22 (KJV) 

One of the basic truths about following Christ that is never preached is that of forgoing wealth in this life so that we may have it in the next. Christ is kind of like Monty Hall on “Let’s Make a Deal” asking us to trade in what we have now for what’s behind door number three.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matthew 6:19-21 (KJV) 



The things of this life are temporal (temporary), and we cannot take them with us when we die. But riches in Heaven are eternal and cannot be lost, stolen or corrupted. The choice seems obvious, yet so many pick earthly riches. Why?

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16 (KJV) 

All the scripture is laid out for you in “**Salvation: A Non-Negotiable Legally Binding Contract with God**” The above verse is a conditional offer to enter into a legal agreement with God. Simply stated, God’s part is to provide salvation for us and ours is to believe. But when studying the ‘small print’ of this contract (the Bible) we find that believing is more than just an oral statement of faith, it requires action.

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

James 2:19-20 (KJV) 

This is a point where many a potential follower of Christ gets ensnared. Think for a moment, if no works are required of us then why did Christ implore the rich man to go and sell all he had? You see, works are not separate from faith, they are the evidence of it. If we truly believe then acts of obedience will naturally follow. After all was said and done, although the rich man made positive confession of Christ with his mouth he was not willing to give up his riches. But **salvation is a free gift that costs us everything**. What are you holding back from God?

So what are we to make of prosperity preachers? Are you living ‘your best life now’ like Joel Osteen

writes? Reality check folks, if we're literally living our best life now that means we're headed to Hell! Because as Christians our entire lives are supposed to be dedicated to living our best life later. Need further proof? Consider the story Christ told us of Lazarus:

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Luke 16:25 (KJV) 

Now did Lazarus choose to be a beggar? I think not. I believe that he simply trusted in God's divine providence to meet all of his needs. We don't know his story. Perhaps he was once rich like the man in the opening verse but chose to sell all he had. Or maybe he was like the poor widow who gave her last two mites. It doesn't matter to God, He requires that we entrust all we have to Him.

I remember hearing a famous pastor once pray that God would take his life rather than allow him to disgrace the ministry. But God doesn't work like that. Our free wills are always maintained. He didn't stop David from committing adultery with Bathsheba or subsequently murdering her husband. Neither did He stop David's son Solomon from going on to worship strange gods. If we are to change it is because we have made a conscious choice to do so.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Luke 14:28-30 (KJV) 

I've got bad news for those who have not counted the cost for themselves but trusted wolves like Joel Osteen and other prosperity preachers. To be a Christian is to be persecuted as Christ was (**2 Timothy 3:12 KJV** ) , there are no loopholes or shortcuts. If you're not suffering in some way you're simply not doing it right. We are not choosing how we suffer like self flagellation or something, we just live our lives according to scripture and suffering finds us. We must warn others, and preach the gospel regardless of the cost.

